

IN THE CLAIMS

The following is a complete listing of the claims in this application, reflects all changes currently being made to the claims, and replaces all earlier versions and all earlier listings of the claims:

1. (currently amended): A system for facilitating transactions among travel service suppliers and travel service buyers, the system comprising:

a communication network in communication with a plurality of centralized hub sites, and configured to provide access to a plurality of data distribution systems, a travel broker database, and a travel history database through the hub sites,

wherein the plurality of data distribution systems [[is]] are connected to a plurality of travel vendor databases, each data distribution system having a respective load level,

wherein the travel broker database is configured to store information about travel service inventory, [[for]] and to be accessed by the travel service suppliers who post and edit travel service inventory and place reverse auction bids on posted travel service inventory, and [[for]] to be accessed by the travel service buyers [[to]] who browse and perform queries on the travel service inventory and [[to]] accept reverse auction bids for travel service inventory from travel service suppliers, and

wherein the travel history database is configured to store current information about a traveler's future travel plans and to be accessed by travel service buyers who use information about a traveler's future travel plans to place orders to travel service suppliers,

wherein at least one of the travel broker database and the travel history database stores information in a plurality of data sets in a plurality of formats; and

a point of service terminal connected to the communication network and configured to access the travel broker database, ~~[[and]]~~ the travel history database, and one of the plurality of data distribution systems selected based on the load levels of the plurality of data distribution systems, and wherein the travel service buyers, travel service sellers, and the point of service terminal access the travel broker database, the travel history database, ~~and computer reservation systems~~ and the selected one of the plurality of data distribution systems through the communication network.

2. (previously presented): The system according to claim 1, wherein the plurality of data sets are stored as ungrouped data elements formatted as a block of binary via a fixed memory offset.

3. (previously presented): The system according to claim 1, wherein the plurality of data sets are annotated for storage onto a financial transaction instrument with at least one of: a header and a trailer.

4. (currently amended): A method for facilitating transactions among travel service suppliers and travel service buyers, the method comprising the steps of:

providing a communication network in communication with a plurality of centralized hub sites, wherein the communication network is configured to provide access to a plurality of data distribution systems, a travel broker database, a travel history database

[[and]] a point of service terminal through the plurality of hub sites, wherein the plurality of data distribution systems [[is]] are connected to a plurality of travel vendor databases, each data distribution system having a respective load level;

configuring the travel broker database to be accessible by the travel service suppliers and the travel service buyers

and to store information about travel service inventory, wherein the travel service suppliers post and edit information about travel service inventory, and place reverse auction bids on travel service inventory, and wherein travel service buyers browse, perform queries, and accept bids in a reverse auction on the travel service inventory based on the posted travel service inventory information;

configuring the travel history database to store current information about a traveler's future travel plans

and to be accessed by travel service buyers who use information about a traveler's future travel plans to place orders to travel service suppliers; and

providing the point of service terminal with access to the broker database, [[and]] the travel history database, and one of the plurality of data distribution systems selected based on the load levels of the plurality of data distribution systems, through the communication network; and

storing information into the travel broker database and travel history database as a plurality of data sets in a plurality of formats.

5. (previously presented): The method according to claim 4, further comprising the step of:

storing the plurality of data sets as ungrouped data elements formatted as a block of binary via a fixed memory offset.

6. (previously presented): The method according to claim 4, further comprising the steps of:

annotating the plurality of data sets; and

storing the annotated plurality of data sets onto a financial transaction instrument.

7. (currently amended): An integrated travel industry system comprising:
a communication network;
a plurality of centralized hub sites in communication with the communication network including a network connection, a transport mechanism and a redundant data center[[,]];
a plurality of data distribution systems connected to the plurality of centralized hub sites, each data distribution system having a respective load level,

wherein the redundant data center is configured to store a database for each of the plurality of data distribution systems;

~~a data distribution system connected to the plurality of centralized hub sites;~~

a remote site connected to the communication network including a point of service terminal connected to at least one of the plurality of centralized hub sites of the communication network, such that the point of service terminal is configured to access

[[each]] one of the plurality of data distribution systems based on the load levels of the plurality of data distribution systems;

a travel broker database, connected to the communication network and configured to store information about travel service inventory, [[for]] and to be accessed by travel service suppliers who post and edit travel service inventory and place reverse auction bids on posted travel service inventory, and [[for]] to be accessed by travel service buyers to browse and perform queries on the travel service inventory and to accept reverse auction bids for travel service inventory from travel service suppliers; and

a travel history database, connected to the communication network and configured to store current information about a traveler's future travel plans, and to be accessed by travel service buyers who use information about a traveler's future travel plans to place orders to travel service suppliers,

wherein at least one of the travel broker database and the travel history database stores information in a plurality of data sets in a plurality of formats,

wherein the point of service terminal comprises a user interface configured to allow ~~simultaneous~~ access to the selected one of the plurality of data distribution systems, and a customer service application tier having at least one of: a low fare search module, a super passenger name record database, a customer database, a trip planning module, a customer relationship management module, and a workflow module, and

wherein the information is stored in a plurality of data sets in a plurality of formats on the at least one of: the super passenger name record database and the customer database ~~stores information in a plurality of data sets in a plurality of formats,~~ and the

plurality of data sets are stored as ungrouped data elements formatted as a block of binary via a fixed memory offset,

wherein the point of service terminal is configured to access the travel broker database, ~~[[and]]~~ the travel history database, and the selected one of the plurality of data distribution systems, and

wherein the travel service buyers, travel service sellers, and the point of service terminal access the travel broker database, the travel history database, ~~and computer reservation systems~~ and the selected one of the plurality of data distribution systems through the centralized communication network.

8. (canceled).

9. (previously presented): The system according to claim 7, wherein the plurality of data sets are annotated for storage onto a financial transaction instrument.